

The Captain and the Carpenter

By Foxcroft Davis

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SAILORMEN," said the master at arms reflectively, watching half a dozen naval apprentices mending their fishing tackle as the boat bobbed up and down in the short swell off Point Judith. "Sailormen never lies. That's where they're different from any other men. I've seen fellows in the Y. M. C. A. get up and lie like horses, but I never knew a sailorman as ever told a lie. Likewise, you can't fool a sailorman. When you hear people talk about 'Jack ashore' they mean a man as can't be fooled."

"It's a kinder joke that a sailorman can't ride a horse, but you jest put one of 'em aboard a horse and say 'Let go,' and give him scaroom to manoeuvre that horse in and you will be certain to find in the end the sailorman will stick to that horse if he didn't fall overboard through misfortune. The smartest man I ever knewed in my life was a sailorman. Chips, the carpenter on the old Quinebaug, and that man had some adventures as would make your hair rise like the quills on a porcupine."

This sounded so attractive that the naval apprentices, like handsome youngsters, unanimously requested the history of Mr. Chips.

"You might as well stop fishin', boys, while I'm tellin' you about Mr. Chips, now Admiral Chips, of the Imperial Chinese Navy, because the fishes won't bite; they'll be too interested in hearing about this re-markable man."

The naval apprentices took the advice of the master at arms and sat quite still while the boat danced on the sunlit water in the bright August afternoon.

"Well," began Bruce, cutting a fresh quid in a very artistic manner. "I was master at arms on the Quinebaug when Cap'n Dewey, now the Admiral of the Navy, made his last cap'n's cruise. Chips was the carpenter. Now Chips was the sort of man, very spry and ambitious. He had studied navigation and the Lord knows what else besides, including the Chinese language and palmistry. Mrs. Chips was spry, too, and was always darning for Chips to have a social occasion tail to his boat. I really believe Mrs. Chips would have given a new Easter bonnet for a social occasion tail to Chips' coat."

"There ain't no doubt Chips was the best carpenter in the service, and known as much about designin' a ship as some naval constructors. Besides, he was smart at his duty, and in them days, with ships of the type of the old Quinebaug, the carpenter was a mighty important person. However, he didn't have no commission and only a warrant, but you will find, boys, in life, whenever you see a man with great virtues and knowing a whole lot besides there's always some kind of a come-back. The come-back in Chips' case was that he knew too much. It's against the articles of war for a carpenter or master at arms, either, to know too much in this here world."

"So, quite natural, a war broke out between Chips and Cap'n Dewey, and that war lasted from the day we sailed from the Brooklyn Navy Yard until nearly two years afterward, when one time in August, on a August day like this, with a moderate wind and fair, in the harbor of Villy Franky in the Mediterranean Sea, both Cap'n Dewey and Chips fought scientific. Some times the carpenter was on top and sometimes the Cap'n was, and there was betts forward as to which would come out ahead when the cruise was up."

"Well, when we was layin' at Villy Franky early one morning, the King of Greece came sailin' up in the royal yacht, and anchored about six hundred yards ahead of us. Cap'n Dewey was a mighty perlit man, so he did the handsome thing by the King, salutin' and all the usual rot. This seemed to tickle the King of Greece half to death, so he sent a boat, sayin', if it was agreeable to Cap'n Dewey, he would be very glad to come aboard the Quinebaug at five o'clock that afternoon and see if there was anything doing. Of course, Cap'n Dewey said it would be most agreeable to him, so at five o'clock the ship was dressed, the band was bleatin' and all the officers was out in full tugs, and when the King came aboard the yards was mamed. You don't never see them kind of handsome doings with modern ships."

"I have seen Cap'n Dewey make a flyin' moor in the old Hartford as would have made Paul Jones gnash his teeth out of envy, hatred, malice and all uncharitableness. Well, the warrant officers was all drawn up in the waist of the ship. The time was, when a ship had a waist and a bonnet and a shoe, exactly like a woman, and ships is a good deal like women now, I can tell you. I've seen a ship have stage fright and nervous prostration and hysterics just as good as any woman could have 'em to save her life. But didn't none of Cap'n Dewey's ships have them tantrums. When he had a ship, he made her mind. At a mighty good thing to make a ship

and a woman, too, mind the hellum you just nail that inside your heads, boys. "Well, to go back to Mr. Chips, a most re-markable man. Chips, of course, headed us warrant officers, and I will say a finer lookin' set of warrant officers I never see. Chips was a very handsome man, in addition to his virtues and vices, and he had a Horseyzed, nickel-steel plated gall that he always kept with him. After the King of Greece had had all the commissioned officers presented to him, he said, says he to Cap'n Dewey, says he, 'I should very much like,' he says, 'to have,' says he, 'the warrant officers of this ship presented,' he says. 'Certainly, your Majesty,' said Cap'n Dewey, as perlit as a basket of chips—now I ain't tryin' to make no mean joke on Chips' name, so you needn't laugh. Cap'n Dewey and the King, with a whole lot of royal dukes and princes congrein' 'em, come up, and Cap'n Dewey says, 'Your Majesty, may I present our carpenter, Mr. Chips?' "At this, Chips ducked his head and so did the King of Greece. Then the King, who wasn't as handsome a man as Chips, says, 'Glad to meet you, Mr. Chips. I hope you have had a pleasant cruise.'

Chip's Chance.
"Now here come in the chabst that Chips had been waitin' for ever since the hand played 'The Girl I Left Behind Me,' when we picked our way out of the harbor of New York nearly two years before, and Chips was equal to it. 'Well, King,' says Chips, because Chips was a most perlit man, and though he had never chatted with a king before he knew how to do the trick, so he says, very bland, but honest: 'Well, King, to tell you the truth, I never have been so devilled in my life as I have been on this cruise.'

Here Bruce made a dramatic pause, while the naval apprentices looked at each other with startled eyes.

"That's what Mr. Chips, the carpenter

and twenty feet long and forty-two feet beam, it isn't big enough for you and me, Mr. Chips. So I would suggest that when we get to Gibraltar, three days from now, you shall ask for sick leave. We shall find the Iroquois at Gibraltar ready to hoist her homeward bound pennant, and if you could have an attack of nervous prostration or chickenpox or some stople, harmless thing like that you could get home quietly and comfortably. Don't you feel a little ill at this moment, Mr. Chips?" "No, sir," said Chips, calm and collected. "I never felt better in my life, thank you. If you will permit me to say, I have a very high respect of your opinion on all professional subjects, so I will agree to develop a very severe attack of rheumatism as soon as we get to Gibraltar." "And I will arrange to have you surrendered and condemned and sent home," replied the Cap'n, cheerful like, "and perhaps the sea voyage and the prospect of being united with your family may cure you on the way over."

"Well, that's the way things fell out. The morning after we got to Gibraltar Chips waked up unable to move hand or foot and refused all nourishment. The doctor, who was sharp, offered Chips a drink of whiskey by way of medicine, but Chips firmly refused, and Chips was from Maine, too. The doctor then reported to the Cap'n that he thought Mr. Chips was seriously ill, and in about fifteen minutes the whole thing was fixed up, and Chips was carried aboard the Iroquois, unable to put his foot to the deck. When I went to tell him goodbye the next day, before the Iroquois sailed, Chips was in bed sufferin' tortures, but I have reliable information to the effect that Chips made a rapid and complete recovery before the Iroquois touched the Gulf Stream."

Chip Joins the Chinese Navy.
"The experience, though, had a blightin' effect upon Chips. He was ordered to the League Island Navy Yard, and right across the river a big cruiser was buildin' for the Chinese navy. There was an Eng-

Chinese Navy, and the whole thing done in first class style. Admiral Dewey wasn't to be outdone and went in his launch with his aid and a couple of other officers to pay his respects to Admiral Chips.

"As soon as I heard the name I had my suspicions, and when the launch came back I had a private interview with the coxswain. 'It's Chips,' said the coxswain, who was a Methodist, and could command a prayin' squad jest as well as a chaplain. 'I saw from the launch the meetin' between Chips and the Admiral. The French Admiral was there, payin' a visit to Admiral Chips. First, Admiral Chips made a bow, which Admiral Dewey returned. Then Chips made another bow, the most perlit I ever seen, but Admiral Dewey seen him, and went him one better. Then Admiral Chips made his last and final bow, grin' off all his compliments at once, like them runs in the double turments, but Admiral Dewey's third bow was of such a nature that I seen with my own eyes the French Admiral when he laid right down and died of despair. I'm told he come to life later on.'

She Entertained the Admirals.
"Now, if the coxswain hadn't been a sailorman I wouldn't have believed this, but bein' a sailorman 'tain't likely he lied about it. The coxswain further told me that Mrs. Chips, who I had known as a very nice woman, havin' met her frequent at dances in the mill loft and danced the schottish with her—Lord, but she was a high kicker!—had cut the carpenter's wife complete and was doin' the admiral's lady to perfection. Chips invited Admiral Dewey and the French admiral into his house, a kind of pagoda, when Mrs. Chips received 'em most gracious, grin' 'em tea, holdin' her little finger out as she drank hers and askin' Admiral Dewey why he hadn't got married. Admiral Dewey, didn't ask for no quarter no more than Chips did, but jest stood the fire of Mrs. Chips, and every time she fired a seven inch gun at him he fired back with a thirteen inch gun. That's Admiral Dewey, you understand. But I must say, after the engagement was over and Admiral Dewey come aboard he looked to me a little pale."

"However, he kept his nerve straight through three days. Admiral Chips give him a big dinner, askin' the French and British admirals and their staffs. They had twenty-five Chinese servants to serve that dinner, and I'm told that the three admirals around the council table agreed it was as good grub as ever they whacked their jaws or walloped their tongues over. Mrs. Chips looked like a bonfire, she had on so many diamonds and rubies. The tail of her gown, it was reported for'd on the Olympia, was a yard and three-quarters, and she took Admiral Dewey in to dinner. The Admiral acted like a hero and told Mrs. Chips that as an American he was proud of her. When dinner was over Admiral Chips rose and proposed the health of Admiral Dewey, and said as how the most charming recollection of his life was when he had the honor of serving under Admiral Dewey. He remembered in particular a delightful cruise in the Quinebaug, which wound up at Villy Franky, when they received the compliment of a visit from the King of Greece."

"I'm told, boys, that that was the only minute when Admiral Dewey showed any emotion, but that he breathed hard for a minute or two. When he replied, however, he said that the delightful occasion of the visit of the King of Greece would ever be embalmed among the most precious incidents in a long and well spent life. I think the French and British Admirals thought Chips had been Admiral Dewey's flag lieutenant. Well, boys, as you may guess, there was considerable excitement for'd aboard Admiral Chips, of the Imperial Chinese Navy, but we knew well enough that Chips was aft for life, especially when Admiral Dewey returned Admiral Chips' broadside by givin' him and the French and British Admirals a dinner aboard the Olympia."

Mrs. Chip Comes Aboard.

"It was said that Admiral Dewey sent for his cook and told that cook that the dinner served at Admiralty House by Admiral Chips, of the Imperial Chinese Navy, was a glorious dinner, but if the dinner served aboard the Olympia was not gloriously he would give that cook hell, and a court-martial besides, which is in general about the same thing. Both the French and British Admirals was rear admirals, and so was Admiral Dewey in them days, but Chips was a full admiral, so he ranked 'em all. Mrs. Chips was, of course, invited, and was the only lady in the party. If the Olympia had been one of them old square riggers—God bless 'em!—we'd have manned the yards for Mrs. Chips. As it was, we manned the flag, and she came up the ladder like the Empress of China then the carpenter's wife. She had a little Chinese boy for train bearer, and she had on so many jewels that her vitals was as well protected as if she had an armor belt of chilled steel."

"Admiral Dewey met her at the gangway, and it seemed as if all the side boys and everything that was intended for the Admirals was meant for Mrs. Chips. Admiral Dewey gave her a bokoy as big as

a haystack and acted like he couldn't live without her. Chips was grand in his Chinese uniform, but Mrs. Chips simply took the shine off everybody. I'm told by the cabin stewards that Mrs. Chips did up both the French and British Admirals—for she was a handsome woman, was Mrs. Chips—and that she knew the regulations about admirals' ladies just as well as if she had been flag lieutenant. "When dinner was over Chips said to Admiral Dewey, so the cabin steward



"When she came up the ladder she looked like the Empress of China."

told me, 'By the way, Admiral, I understand that you have an old shipmate of ours aboard—Brace, the master-at-arms. He was with us on the cruise we made when the King of Greece took tea with us.' 'Yes, my dear Admiral,' replied Admiral Dewey, takin' a light from Chips. 'Shall I send for Brace?' 'A thousand thanks,' answered Chips. The first I knew, the orderly come for'd lookin' like he'd seen a ghost. 'Mr. Brace,' says he, 'Admiral Chips has expressed a wish to see you. I didn't lose my nerve, and I went aft. I heard Chips sayin' to Admiral Dewey, 'Would it be agreeable to you, Admiral, if I saw Brace in the inner cabin?' He might be embarrassed in the presence of admirals like you and me.' 'Certainly,' said Admiral Dewey, the perlitest man alive. 'Come in, Mr. Brace,' Admiral Chips will see you in the inner cabin."

Chip's Victory.
"When I walked through the cabin, all lighted up and the flowers on the table, and the shaded lights, and the champagne flowin' like water, I felt queer in my gizzard. But when I passed Mrs. Chips' chair she turned round and said, kinder grand like, 'How do you do, Mr. Brace?' I remember you very well when you were shipmates with the Admiral.' She always called Chips 'the Admiral,' as if there never had been a admiral before."

"She certainly was the grandest woman, takin' her all in all, I ever see. I managed to make a bow, and though I felt dizzy in my head I steered my way into the inner cabin somehow. Chips shut the door and then come and dropped down on the transom with me. 'Brace,' said he in a whisper, 'pound me; pinch me hard. It seems to me a settin' here with you that the procession of the equinoxes has stopped and the latitude is all crooked.' 'Chips,' says I, 'you deserve it. You are a very re-markable man, Chips, and bound to rise, and I don't begrudge you, but I wouldn't go through the ordeal of a settin' at the same table with Admiral Dewey and knockin' up against him for a million of monkeys.' 'It's damned hard,' said Chips, the sweat runnin' down his face. 'I've 'luffed it out so far, but I don't know at what minute I will have apoplexy.' 'Don't give up the ship,' says I to Chips. 'You've got a first class flag lieutenant in Mrs. Chips, and I think she's doin' her whole duty like a man.'

"She is," answered Chips, still sweatin' like a bull in the shade. "She's really in command durin' these tryin' events. I had a great mind to give in as soon as I saw the Olympia, and to be took ill on the spot, but Mrs. Chips, she says to me jest like you did, 'Chips, don't give up the ship,' but I tell you, Brace, I would rather take the Son of a Gun into action with the Olympia this minute, though I know I should get licked, than dine with Admiral Dewey, as I'm doin'." "Stand by the flag," says I. "You haven't begun to fight yet. We're leavin' at daybreak to-morrow mornin', and you certainly ought to be able to keep the bridge until then. 'That I think I can do,' said Chips, plous like, 'with the help of God and Mrs. Chips. Now, Brace, can I do anything for you?' 'Nothin' in the world,' says I, 'but assure me of your good will, which I know I had before, and I want you to tell Mrs. Chips that as an American I glory in

her. That woman a settin' in there with them three Admirals has done more for the honor of the Stars and Stripes than ever you did, Chips, and I think you are a good man."

"Every word you say is true," says Chips, says he, 'except about my bein' a good man, but I tell you, if the Olympia stays here another day, and I have to meet Admiral Dewey face to face, I will have an attack of emotional insanity complicated with the flyin' jimmies. I look easy, Brace, but I tell you, there's a bilin' kettle inside of me. But I'm goin' through with it. I kinder sheered him up and told him to be a little more condescendin' to me—maybe that might make him feel better, and he said he would. So when we went into the cabin again Chips put on a lofty air and said, 'Well, Brace, I'm delighted to have seen you, and I will say this, that I never had a better master-at-arms than when you sailed with me in the Quinebaug before Admiral Dewey took her.'

"Of course, them two Admirals a-settin' there thought Chips had commanded the Quinebaug before Admiral Dewey. Boys, if I live to be a million years old I never will cease to admire Chips for the noble way he said that. Before I could recover from this projectile Mrs. Chips fired another high explosive. 'Good by, Mr. Brace,' she says, smilin' most sweet, 'I hope your wife and family are well, and you will soon have the pleasure of rejoinin' them in America.' Now, Mrs. Chips knew jest as well as I did that I never had no wife, thank God, nor no chick nor child. There's some things that I've always steered shy of, and one of them is women. Mrs. Chips had worried me a thousand times in the old days about gettin' married, and I suspected that she wanted me to ship as husband to a cousin of hers as kep' a sailor boardin' house in Brooklyn—a nice lookin' old maid about forty-five."

"Mrs. Chips used to say to me in them days, 'Mr. Brace, widders is kinder over-rulin' and upsettin', and young girls is flighty, but if you marry a good, steady old maid she'll be grateful to you, and treat you humane.' I would always tell Mrs. Chips that I would propose to her cousin before I sailed on my next cruise, but somehow, in the hurry of departure,

In Clara Morris' "Salad Days"

BACK in the days when Artemus Ward was still the star humorist of the Cleveland (Ohio) Plain Dealer, where he began his career as a typesetter, a paragraph appeared in its dramatic column announcing the appearance of a "talented" young lady—Miss Clara Morris.

Mr. W. R. Rose, who discovered the item in the back files of the Plain Dealer under date of June 26, 1868, says: "It is curious because it refers to a Cleveland girl who became famous shortly afterward, and because the man who wrote the item clearly shows that he had no anticipation of the fame the girl would achieve—both for herself or for Cleveland. It is curious, too, because it indicates what the popular taste among local theatregoers was in that day of stage

I never remembered about that offer until I was in blue water, and then it was too late. All this flashed through my mind, and I think through Mrs. Chips', but, like Admiral Dewey, I kep' my nerve with me, and I said, 'Thank you, Madame, I anticipate a great deal of pleasure in meetin' Mrs. Brace and my devoted children.' I think I see a kinder grin on Admiral Dewey's mouth, for he knew just as well as Mrs. Chips that I didn't have no wife and would rather be electrocuted than git married any day."

"We sailed next mornin' from Pull-and-Be-Damned, and the last thing we see was Admiral Chips standin' on the dock with all his staff around him, and Mrs. Chips flutterin' her lace handkerchief in her lily white hand from the window of Admiralty House. It wasn't three months later when we went into Manila Bay, and in about two hours acquired twelve hundred islands and twelve million heathens, and bluffed Prince Henry of Prussia, and did the week's washin' besides. You see, we went into Manila and did them things jest in the watch when we would have been doin' the washin', so after every-thing was over, about eleven o'clock, we hauled off and cleaned up the ship, and then the men was piped to the washin' and they turned in and did the washin'."

"Before twelve o'clock all the victorious ships was dressed with shirte and trousers, and hammocks hung out to dry, while Prince Henry was chewin' the rag as to whether he should fire into us or not. When he seen the Olympia's people doin' the washin' he concluded he would let 'em alone forever after. I tell you, boys, that experience with the King of Greece and with Admiral Chips at Pull-and-Be-Damned naval station was a much more tryin' experience for Admiral Dewey than Manila Bay. He ought to have been made Admiral of the navy for the way he handled a difficult diplomatic situation with Admiral and Mrs. Chips long before he was made Admiral for bluffing the world and doin' the week's washin' on the first day of May, 1898."

NOTE.—The story about the King of Greece and the Olympia's crew doing the washing before twelve o'clock on the day of the capture of Manila are perfectly true.—F. D.



"Well, King, to tell the truth, I never have been so devilled in my life as I have been on this cruise."